

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 RABAT 01884 031258Z

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ACTION NEA-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-05 H-03 DRC-01 RSC-01 L-03 /019 W

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R 031037Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1774

UNCLAS RABAT 1884

FOR NEA/AFN MACK

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MO

SUBJECT: SENATOR PERCY'S LETTER ON MOHAMED BEN OMAR AL-HABCHI

REF: STATE 81509, RABAT 1720

1. DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO USE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE IN REPLYING TO QUERY BY SENATOR PERCY'S STAFF ON PAULA CONANT'S LETTER RE MOHAMED AL-HABCHI. (WE UNDERSTAND FROM MONTVILLE THAT SENATOR PERCY HIMSELF DID NOT WRITE)
  2. QUOTE EMBASSY RABAT HAS MADE AS CAREFUL AN INVESTIGATION OF THIS PROBLEM AS CIRCUMSTANCES PERMIT AND HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP INFORMATION ON ANYONE BY NAME OF HABCHI.
  3. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT QUITE POSSIBLE THAT PAULA CONANT MAY BE REFERRING TO CASE OF MOHAMED AL Khabchi. PRONUNCIATION OF HABCHI AND Khabchi SIMILAR ENOUGH SO THAT THEY MAY HAVE BEEN CONFUSED. AL Khabchi WAS ONE OF GROUP OF YOUNG RADICALS ARRESTED IN THE SPRING OF 1972 AND CHARGED WITH CARRYING OUT SUBVERSIVE ACTS AGAINST MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT. IN SEPTEMBER, 1973, AFTER WELL-PUBLICIZED TRIAL, CASABLANCA CRIMINAL COURT SENTENCED AL Khabchi TO TEN YEARS IN PRISON, AND DECISION WAS LATER UPHELD BY SUPREME COURT. AL Khabchi IS CURRENTLY SERVING HIS SENTENCE.
  4. TRIAL WAS, OF COURSE, POLITICAL IN NATURE AND AS SUCH WAS CONTROVERSIAL. IMPORTANT POINT, HOWEVER, IS THAT AL Khabchi IS NOT BEING HELD WITHOUT PROPER CHARGES OR TRIAL. HE WAS ARRESTED AND TRIED AND SENTENCED IN OPEN COURT, AND ORIGINAL SENTENCE WAS UPHELD BY HIGHEST JUDICIAL BODY IN THIS COUNTRY. THIS PROCEDURE WAS GENERALLY CONSISTENT WITH MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT'S POLICY
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OF HANDLING POLITICAL TRIALS OPENLY. END QUOTENEUMANN

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRISONERS, LEGISLATIVE MAIL  
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